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nature; nor on the Independent, for that cannot exist under this hypothesis. Therefore, no determination, whether through itself, or through others, can exist, but *each is naught, all is naught*.

But if anything is, then there must exist the Absolute and its reflection; and its reflection implies immortal beings. And man fulfils as subject-object (conscious Ego) the conditions, and is therefore immortal.

THE SETTLEMENT FOR ALL POSSIBLE PHILOSOPHICAL DISPUTES.

By A. E. KROEGER.

It certainly is not likely that two persons will ever fall into a dispute about any proposition, unless they either hold each a different interpretation of one of the words contained in that proposition, or unless that proposition is the assertion of some empirical fact. We, of course, can and will ever continue to dispute about the latter sort of assertions, as, for instance, by whom powder was first invented; how far the sun is distant from the earth, &c.; or rather we will not dispute, but simply disagree on those matters, leaving, by mutual consent, the questions open to future empirical rectification. But that we can ever dispute about propositions of not an empirical character, provided we have precisely the same definition of every word in a proposition, seems to be utterly impossible; since every such proposition ought apparently to be reducible to $A = A$, or $\neg A \text{ not} = A$. For a non-empirical proposition involves a conception, and the assertion of a predicate as belonging to it. Now, if I do not agree to the predicate as a component of the conception, then the difficulty is simply that I have not defined that conception as my opponent wants it defined, and we are involved in a word dispute as to whether in ordinary language the conception named by him is used as involving such a component or not. One of us will then have to choose a different, or coin a new, word, and by so doing our whole dispute will have been settled.

Hence real disputes would seem to be impossible, provided all propositions of a non-empirical character are in fact reducible to $A=A$, or are, as the technical phrase is, *analytic judgments*; and the question remains simply whether another kind of judgments or propositions, that is to say, whether synthetic judgments are possible, and since all empirical propositions upon which, as before said, we may disagree but cannot dispute, are synthetic—whether synthetic propositions *a priori* are possible?

This, it will be remembered, is the famous question which KANT put at the head of his *Critic of Pure Reason*. That they are possible is evident from the fact that every rational being makes use of them. Apart from the Science of Mathematics, the whole Science of Physics, in its fundamental principles, is nothing but a series of synthetical propositions. This is evident, for no empirical observation can produce in me the conception of, for instance, Cause; and yet it is said that every change must have a cause. I observe only the *change*; and yet here arises the conception of *Causality* in my mind, and of itself joins that conception of change. How is this arising at all possible? Hume's solution, that it is a matter of habit, solves nothing. Infinite repetition changes not a change into causality; and thus Hume falls simply into the old sophistical error of thinking he has solved something by squeezing in between the problem and the solution the infinite divisibility of time and space. At every moment and repetition the question still recurs: When does the conception of change turn into that of causality; when does the judgment cease to be analytic and become synthetic? To postpone the time does not make the matter easier. Now if synthetical judgments are possible, and if we can therefore utter of a subject more predicates than its own conception offers, the problem arises:

Can we find a rule by which to go on thus adding predicates, or is that adding an arbitrary matter? If we can find a rule, then all disputes on this field, and with it all disputes whatever, are forever cut off; if no such rule can be discovered, then propositions on any subject not empirical ought to be removed from all controversy, since they cannot be decided.

The rule here demanded was first discovered by Kant; it is singular that it was never before thought of, and that indeed

the whole problem, the solution whereof settles all disputes, was never clearly conceived before him. This rule is :

If in thinking a subject you cannot think it, or think at all, indeed, without thinking something else not contained in the subject, and in so far its opposite, then you can and must add this other additional predicate to the subject in a synthetic judgment.

Now since the thinking of any *particular* subject is empirical, as being this or that, the problem can be reduced to this : What must I think or add synthetically when I think a subject generally ? Or, if I, as the thinking, think a subject generally, what additional thoughts or predicates are involved in such thinking ? The answer to this question gives rise to the Science of Knowledge, and settles all possible disputes. Discovered by Kant, this answer is framed by Fichte as follows :

The thinking power, Ego, cannot think itself without a Non-Ego from which to distinguish itself, nor a Non-Ego without thinking itself as not the Non-Ego ; hence, with the conception of the one, that of the opposite thereof necessarily arises ; with the conception of both, that of their mutual relation ; with the conception of their mutual relation, 1st, that of a relation wherein the Ego is dependent, (causality-relation) ; 2d, that of a relation wherein the Non-Ego is dependent (substantiality-relation), and thus of a conflict of opposite directions in the Ego, which again cannot be thought without an infinite activity of the Ego checked and thus thrown back and again reproduced and cast out (space, matter, and time ; powers of contemplation and sensation) ; which infinite activity can again not be thought as thus checked unless it is also thought as actually infinite and not checked, as which, it is called infinite tendency to determine, Moral Law, &c., wherein the whole problem of synthetical development comes to an end because the starting point has been returned to.

Thus it appears that all disputes may be settled, namely :

All empirical propositions are simply to be determined by empirical proof, and may therefore be disagreed about, but can never be truly disputed ; using the word "disputed" as implying a *compulsion* on the part of the disputant to agree.

All analytic propositions are not disputable, since any dis-

agreement upon them can arise only from a misunderstanding as to the words employed.

No synthetical propositions *a priori* are disputable, since each such proposition must bring the proof that the mind cannot think anything at all without thinking it; a proof that is complete and sufficient.

Only so long as the latter fact is not recognized, as Kant or Fichte's Science of Reason is not accepted or a similar one made, will synthetical propositions be the cause of those endless, empty disputes, that have disgraced theology and philosophy for so many ages, and upon which mankind has wasted such vast energies.

Is it so very difficult to understand this, so very difficult to put, once for all, a stop to the stale and unprofitable speculations that pass for philosophical or metaphysical, and are as much chimeras as the nonsense uttered about square circles and circular squares?

BOOK CLASSIFICATION.

Whoever has had occasion to consult the classified catalogues of Libraries in this country, or in Europe, has no doubt experienced the difficulty met with in determining what classes he shall search in order to find books treating on the topics of his investigation. The difficulty experienced by the investigator is still more troublesome to the corps of librarians. To determine the exact class to which the book belongs, to place it where it can be found again at once when inquired for, to open to the scholar seeking information the entire resources of the library on a special theme,—these are constant duties of the librarian that imply a good system of classification. Every scheme of classification rests upon some philosophical system as its basis. The writer of this article having had to devote considerable time to the subject with a view to the preparation of a library catalogue,* has brought forward his

* That of the Public School Library of St. Louis. The scheme here given has been adopted in its substantial details for that institution, and the forthcoming catalogue will be based on it.